Harry Turbet Taylor's World War II letters

Section 1, Pages 1 - 30

A collection of three photos and letters written by Lt. Harry Turbet Taylor (a.k.a. Tea and H. T.) to the G. S. Houdyshell family in Topeka, Kansas. Taylor, a member of the Eighth U.S. Air Force and later the Ninth U.S. Air Force, served as a B-26 Marauder pilot during World War II in England. The letters were transcribed by Mary Lou Houdyshell Anderson, Taylor's niece. Included in the collection are an account written by Taylor telling about an incident where his plane was hit by flak in a bombing run at Noball (V-11) Launch Site and biographical information.

Creator: Taylor, Harry Turbet

Date: September 20, 1942 - October 2, 1944

Callnumber: B Taylor, Harry T. *2-4 (photographs)

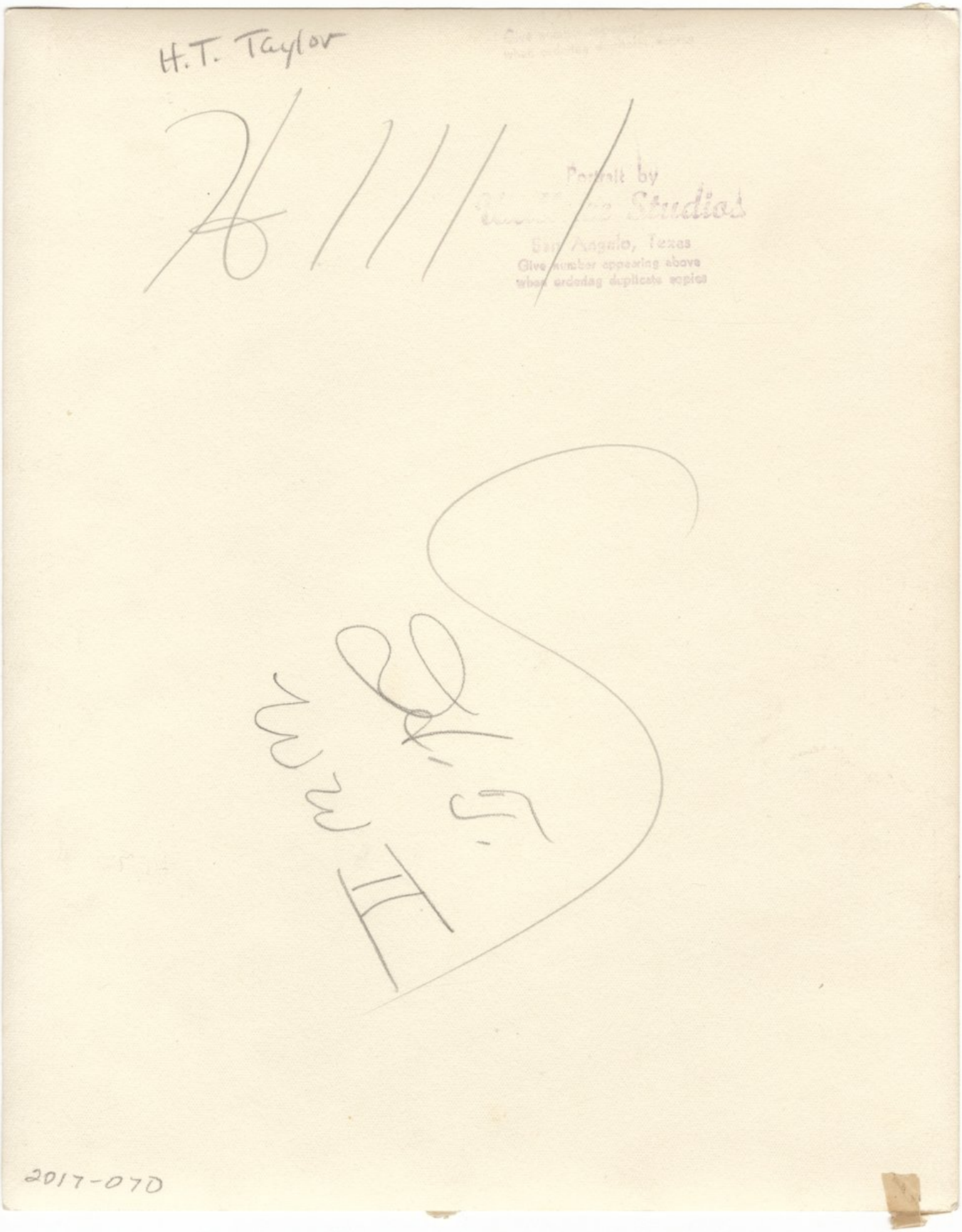
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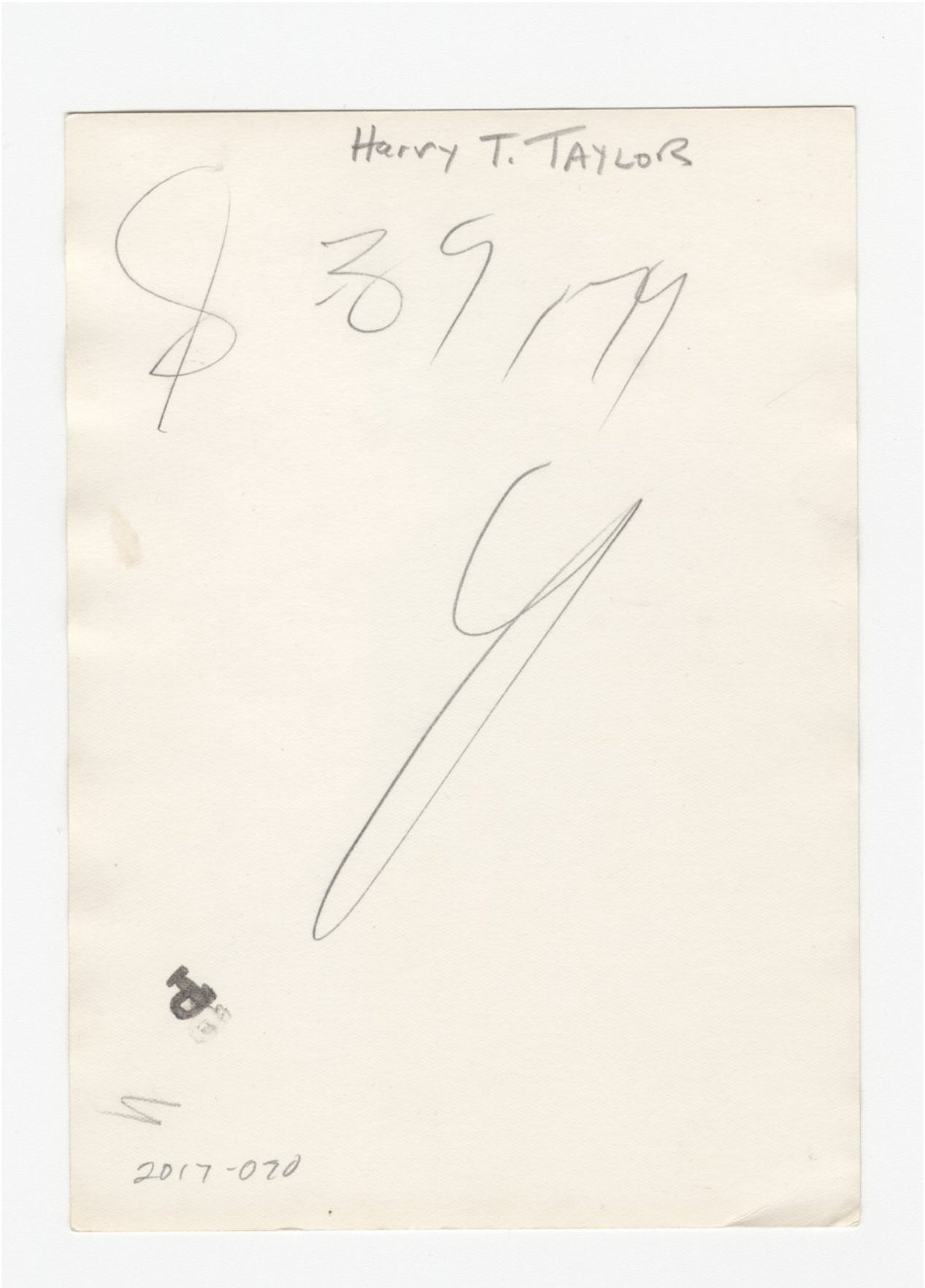
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Harry Turbet Taylor's World War II letters

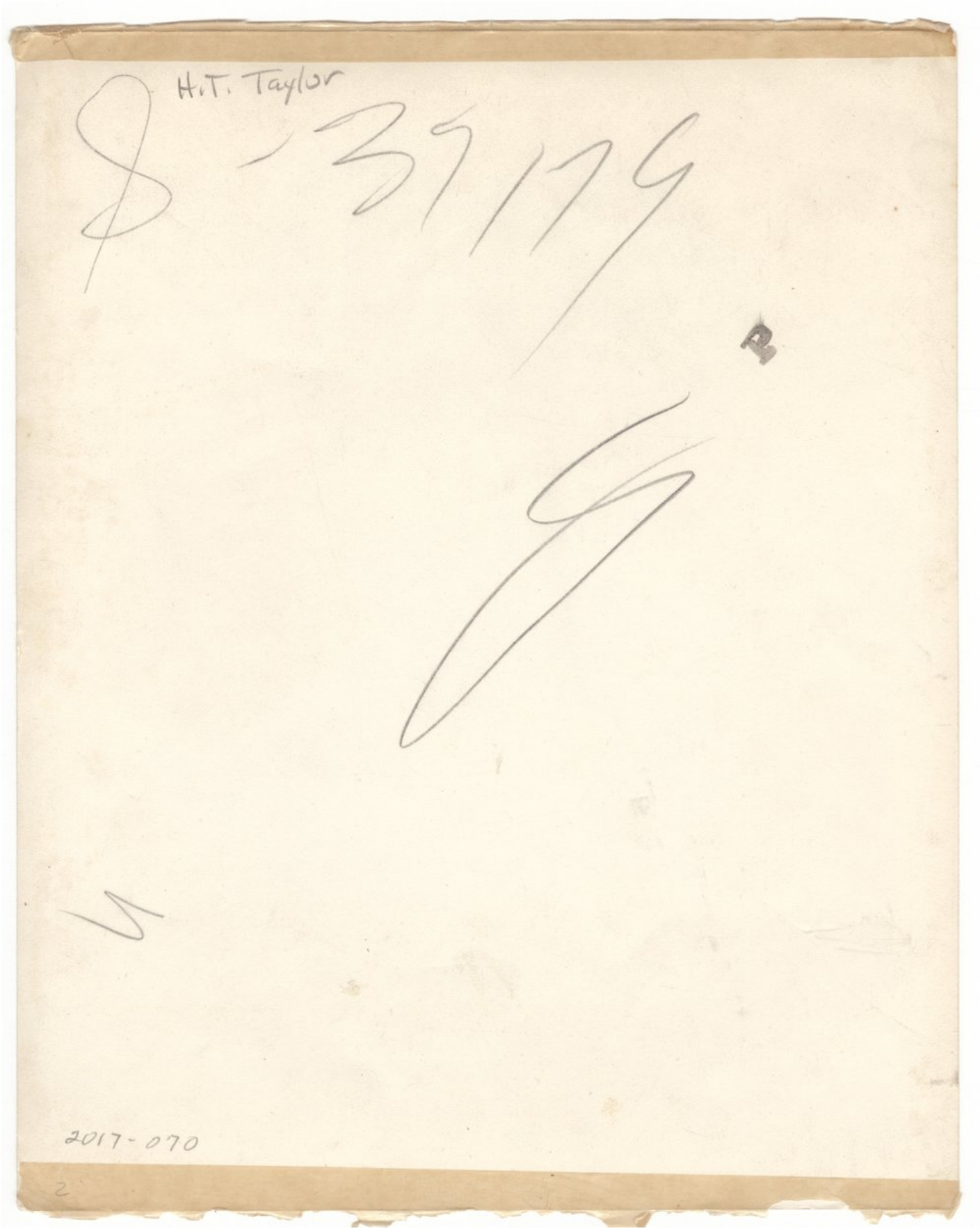


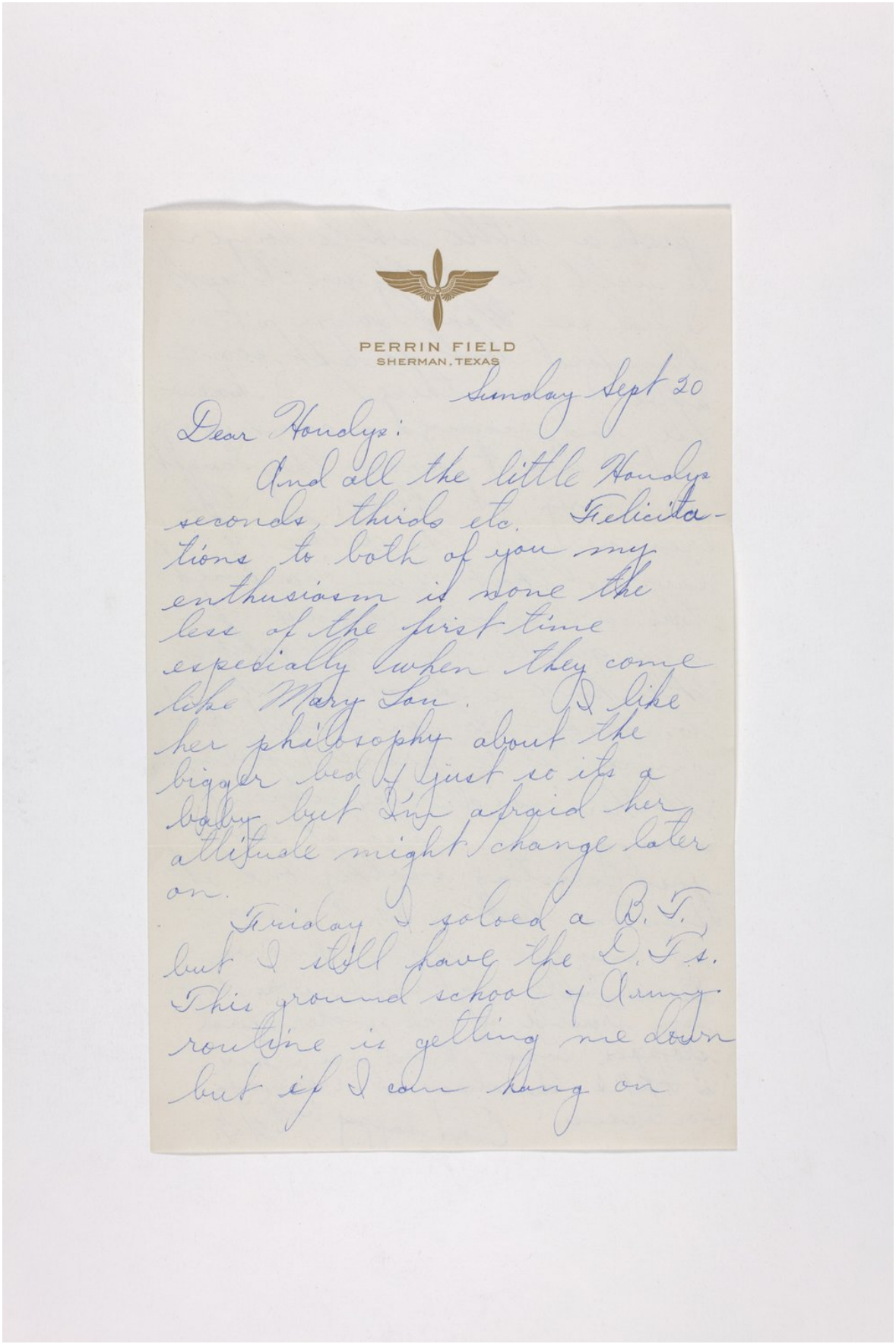

H.T. Taylor
Portrait by
Studios
San Angelo, Texas
Give number appearing above
when ordering duplicate copies
2017-070




Harry T. TAYLOR
2017-020


U.S.
U.S.


H.T. Taylor
2017-070



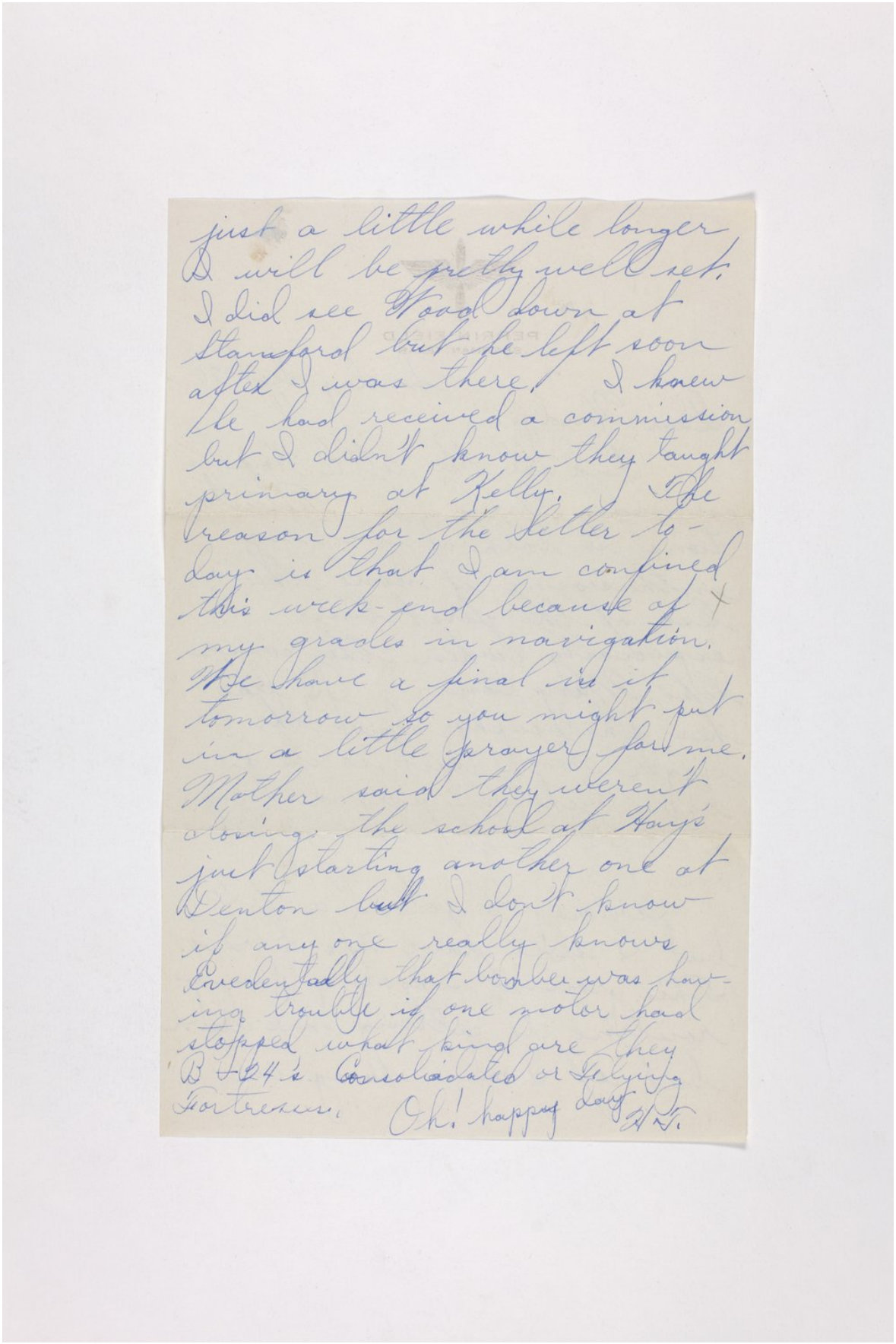
PERRIN FIELD
SHERMAN, TEXAS

Sunday Sept 20

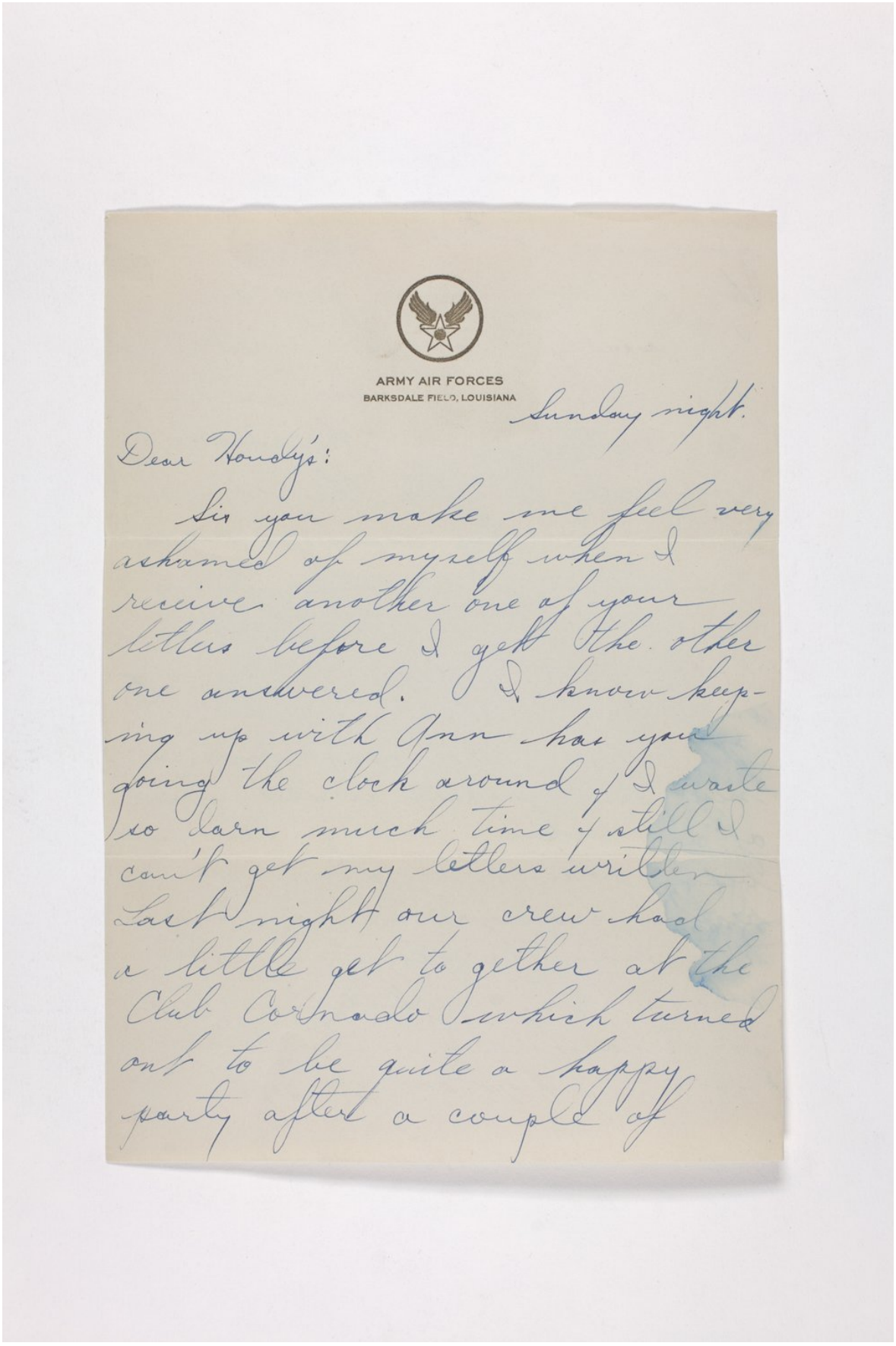
Dear Hondlys:

And all the little Hondlys seconds, thirds etc. Felicitations to both of you my enthusiasm is none the less of the first time especially when they come like Mary Lou. I like her philosophy about the bigger bed I just so its a baby but I'm afraid her attitude might change later on.

Friday I soloed a B.T. but I still have the D.F.'s. This ground school & Army routine is getting me down but if I can hang on



just a little while longer I will be pretty well set. I did see Wood down at Stamford but he left soon after I was there. I knew he had received a commission but I didn't know they taught primary at Kelly. The reason for the letter today is that I am confined this week-end because of my grades in navigation. We have a final in it tomorrow so you might put in a little prayer for me. Mother said they weren't closing the school at Hays just starting another one at Denton but I don't know if any one really knows. Evidently that bomber was having trouble as one motor had stopped what kind are they B-24's Consolidated or Flying Fortresses. Oh! happy day. 2/2.

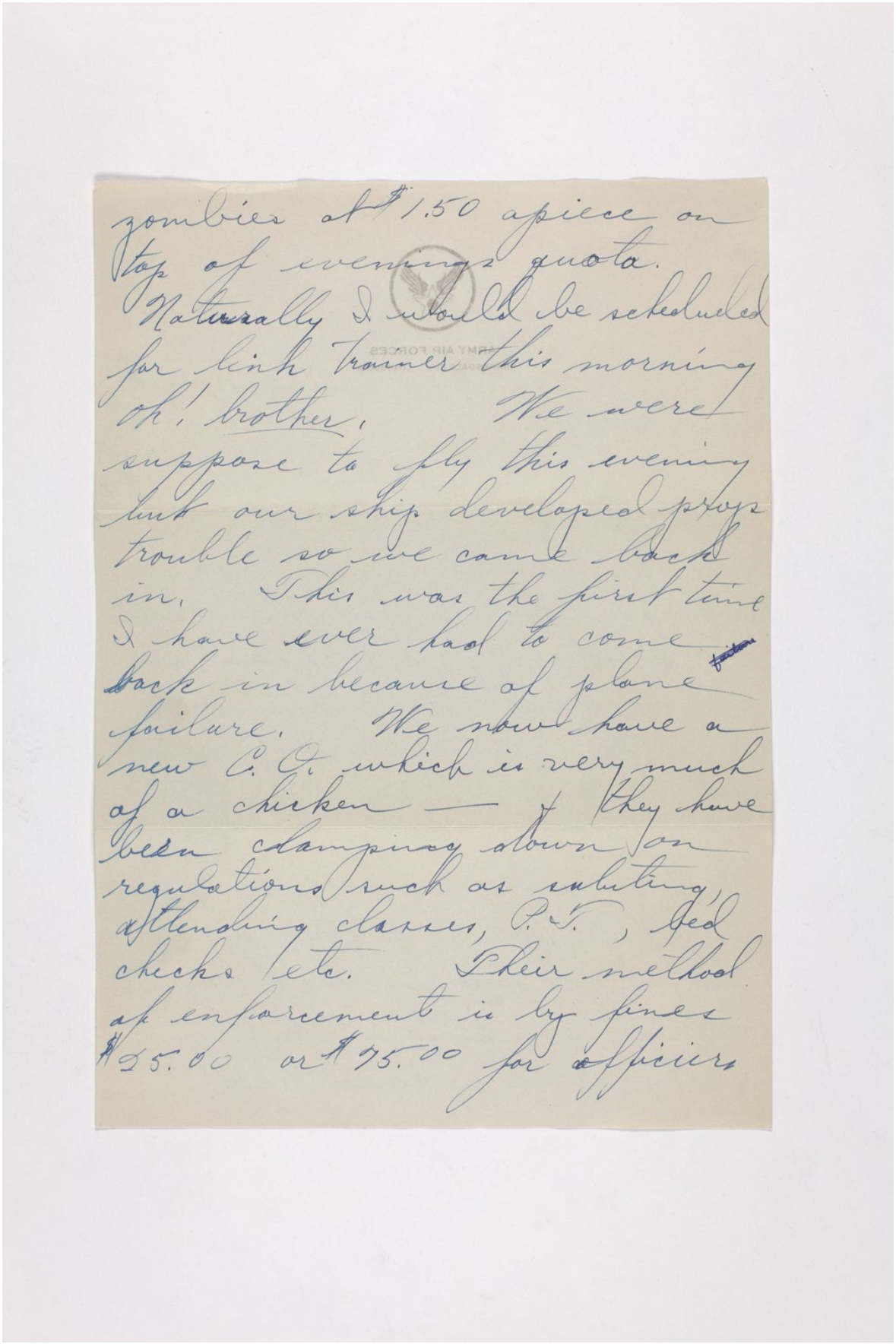


ARMY AIR FORCES
BARKSDALE FIELD, LOUISIANA

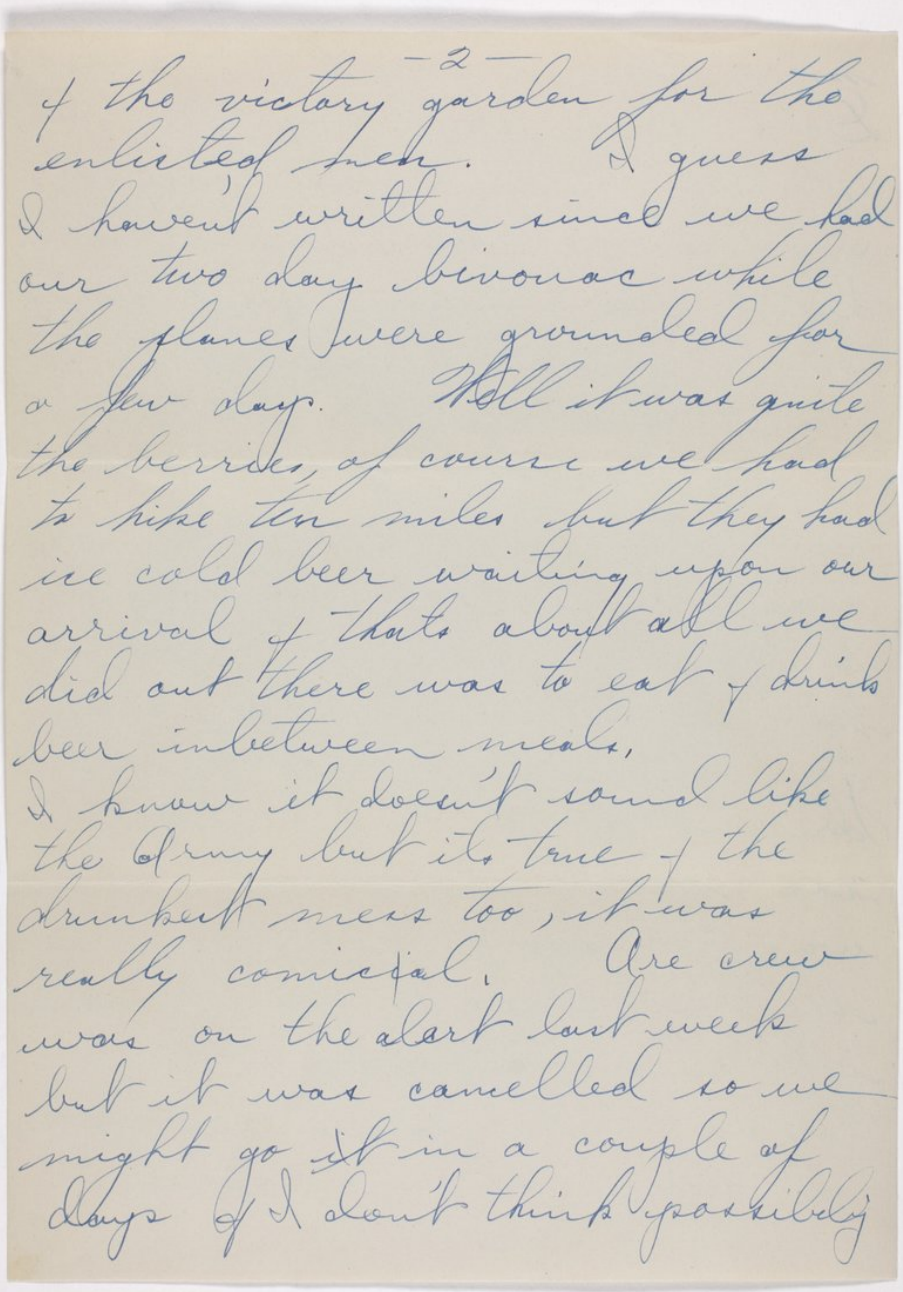
Sunday night.

Dear Howdy's:

Sir you make me feel very ashamed of myself when I receive another one of your letters before I get the other one answered. I know keeping up with Ann has you going the clock around & I waste so darn much time & still I can't get my letters written. Last night our crew had a little get together at the Club Coronado which turned out to be quite a happy party after a couple of

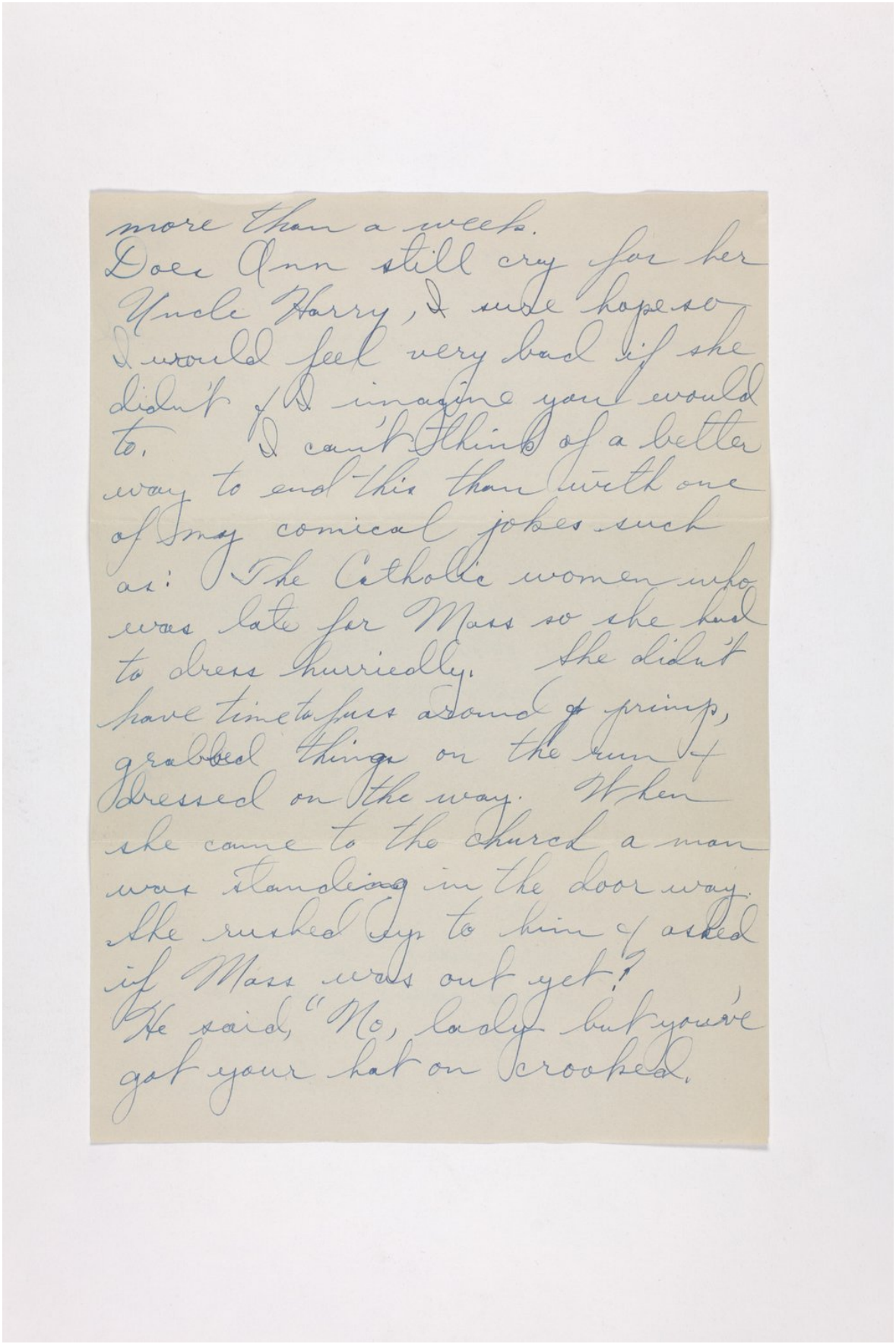


zombies at $1.50 apiece on top of evenings quota. Naturally I would be scheduled for link trainer this morning oh! brother. We were suppose to fly this evening but our ship developed prop trouble so we came back in. This was the first time I have ever had to come back in because of plane failure. We now have a new C. O. which is very much of a chicken — & they have been clamping down on regulations such as saluting, attending classes, P.T., Ged checks etc. Their method of enforcement is by fines $25.00 or $75.00 for officers

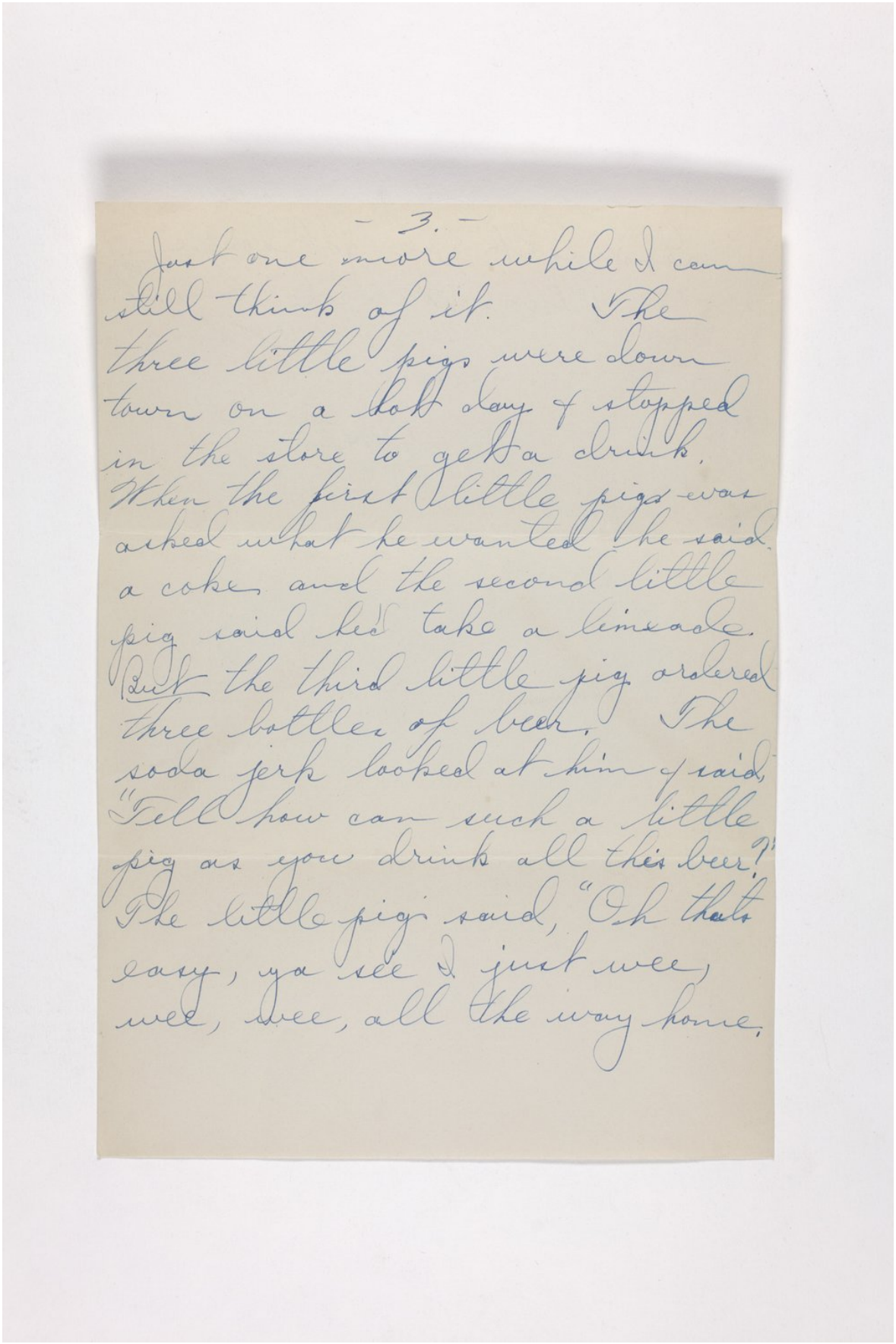


-2-

of the victory garden for the enlisted men. I guess I haven't written since we had our two day bivouac while the planes were grounded for a few days. Well it was quite the berrides, of course we had to hike ten miles but they had ice cold beer waiting upon our arrival & that's about all we did out there was to eat & drink beer inbetween meals.
I know it doesn't sound like the Army but its true & the drunkest mess too, it was really comical. Are crew was on the alert last week but it was cancelled so we might go it in a couple of days & I don't think possibly

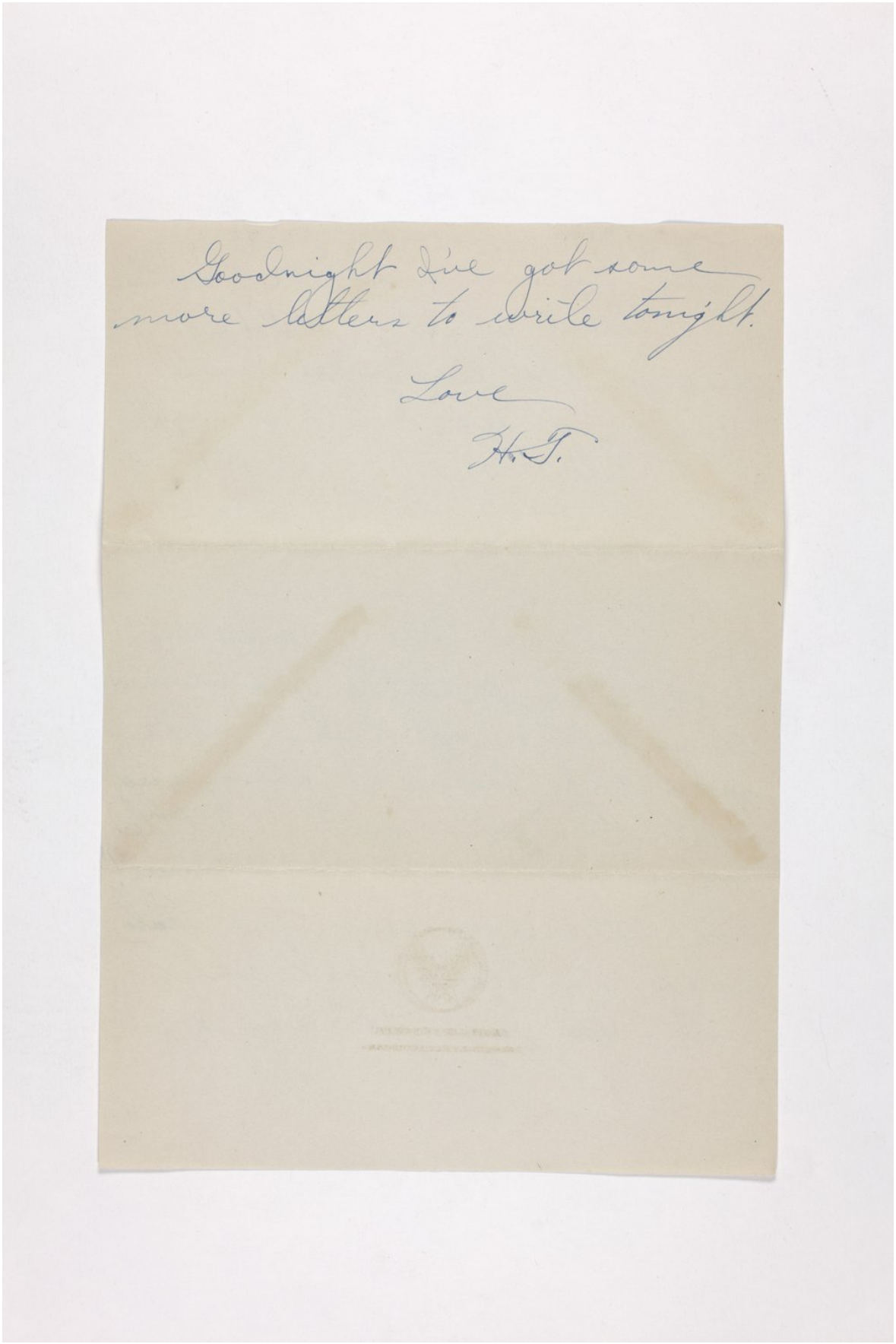


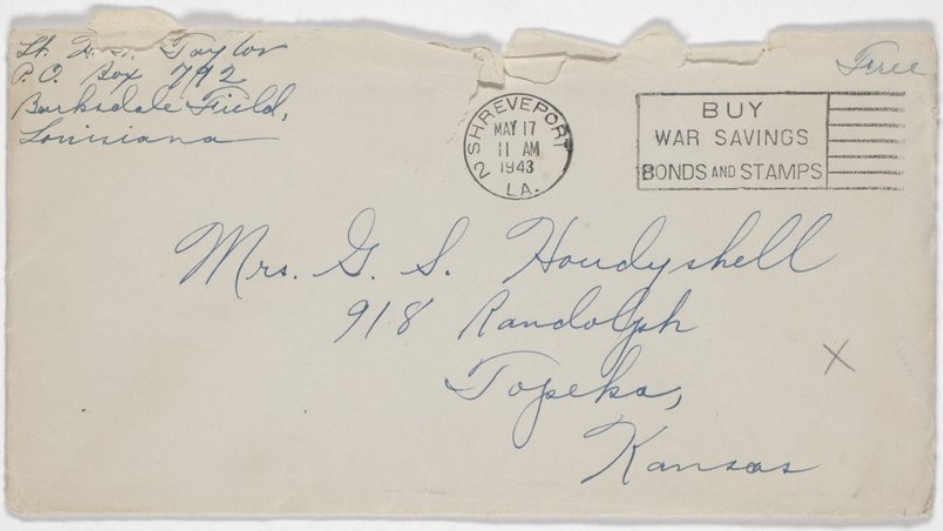
more than a week.
Does Ann still cry for her Uncle Harry, I sure hope so I would feel very bad if she didn't. I imagine you would to. I can't think of a better way to end this than with one of my comical jokes such as: The Catholic women who was late for Mass so she had to dress hurriedly. She didn't have time to fuss around & primp, grabbed things on the run & dressed on the way. When she come to the church a man was standing in the door way. She rushed up to him & asked if Mass was out yet?
He said, "No, lady but you're got your hat on crooked.

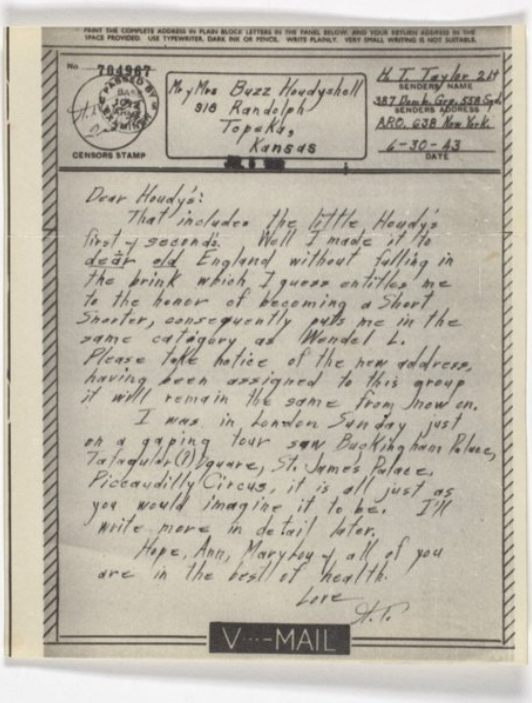


-3-

Just one more while I can still think of it. The three little pigs were down town on a hot day & stopped in the store to get a drink. When the first little pigs was asked what he wanted he said a coke and the second little pig said he'd take a limeade. But the third little pig ordered three bottles of beer. The soda jerk looked at him & said, "Tell how can such a little pig as you drink all this beer?" The little pigs said, "Oh that's easy, ya see I just wee, wee, wee, all the way home.


Goodnight Sue got some
more letters to write tonight.
Love
H. T.


Lt. H. T. Taylor
P.O. Box 792
Barksdale Field,
Louisiana
SHREVEPORT
MAY 17
11 AM
1943
LA.
Free
BUY
WAR SAVINGS
BONDS AND STAMPS
Mrs. G. S. Handyshell
918 Randolph
Topeka,
Kansas



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No. 704997

CENSORS STAMP

Mr/Mrs Buzz Houdyshell
918 Randolph
Topeka,
Kansas

H T Taylor 2lt
SENDER'S NAME
387 Bn A Gru 558 Sqd
SENDER'S ADDRESS
APO 638 New York
6-30-43
DATE

Dear Houdy's:

That includes the little Houdy's first 7 seconds. Well I made it to dear old England without falling in the brink which I guess entitles me to the honor of becoming a Short Snorter, consequently puts me in the same catagory as Wendel L. Please take notice of the new address, having been assigned to this group it will remain the same from now on.

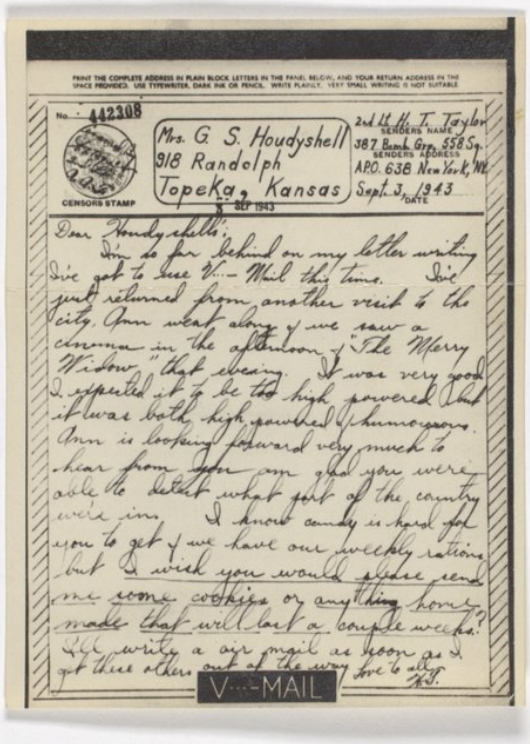
I was in London Sunday just on a gaping tour saw Buckingham Palace, Tafalgar (?) Square, St. James Palace, Piccadilly Circus, it is all just as you would imagine it to be. I'll write more in detail later.

Hope, Ann, Maryhey & all of you are in the best of health.

Love H.T.

V---MAIL

Harry Turbet Taylor's World War II letters



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No. 442308

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Mrs. G. S. Houdyshell
918 Randolph
Topeka, Kansas

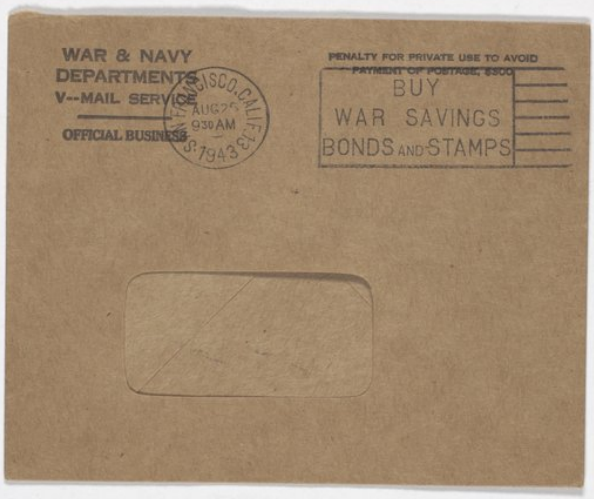
SEP 1943

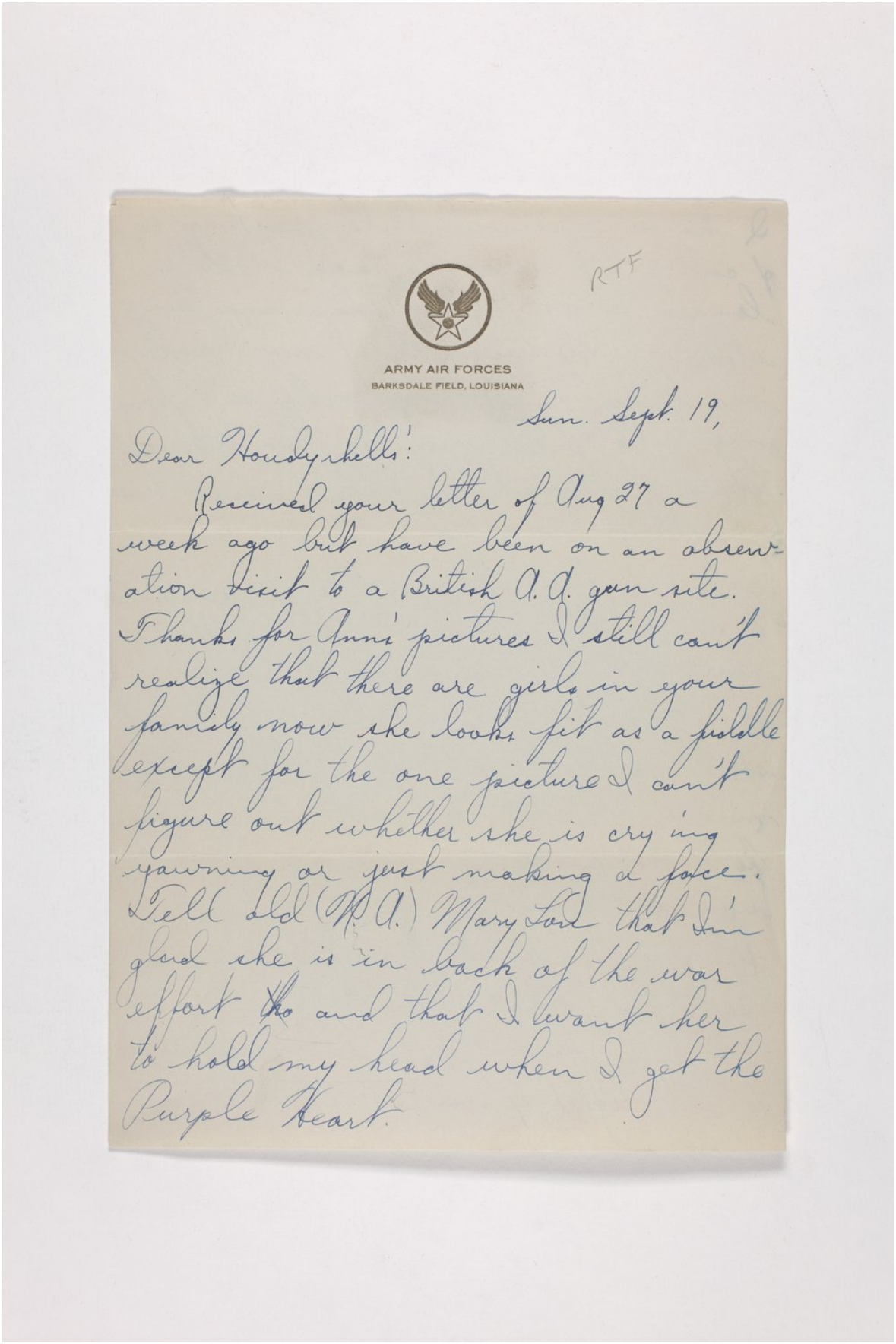
2nd Lt. Harry T. Taylor
SENDERS NAME
387 Bomb Grp. 558 Sq.
SENDERS ADDRESS
APO. 638 New York, N.Y.
Sept. 3, 1943
DATE

Dear Houdyshells:

I'm so far behind on my letter writing I've got to use V-Mail this time. I've just returned from another visit to the city. Ann went along & we saw a cinema in the afternoon of "The Merry Widow" that evening. It was very good I expected it to be too high powered but it was both high powered & humorous. Ann is looking forward very much to hear from you am glad you were able to detect what part of the country we're in. I know candy is hard for you to get & we have our weekly rations but I wish you would please send me some cookies or anything homey made that will last a couple weeks. I'll write a air mail as soon as I get these others out of the way. Love to all. H.T.

V-MAIL


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PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID
BUY
WAR SAVINGS
BONDS AND STAMPS



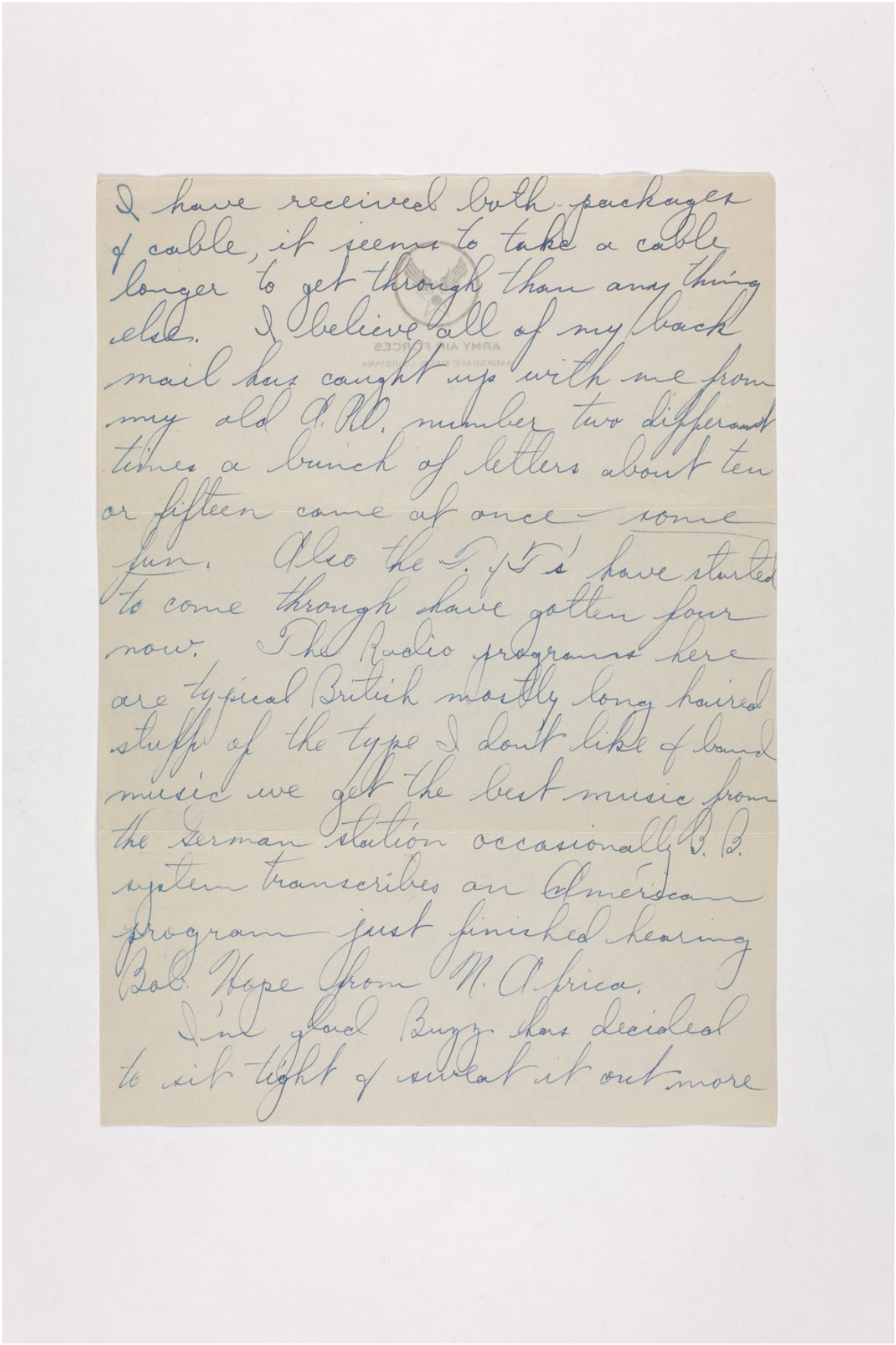
RTF

ARMY AIR FORCES
BARKSDALE FIELD, LOUISIANA

Sun. Sept. 19,

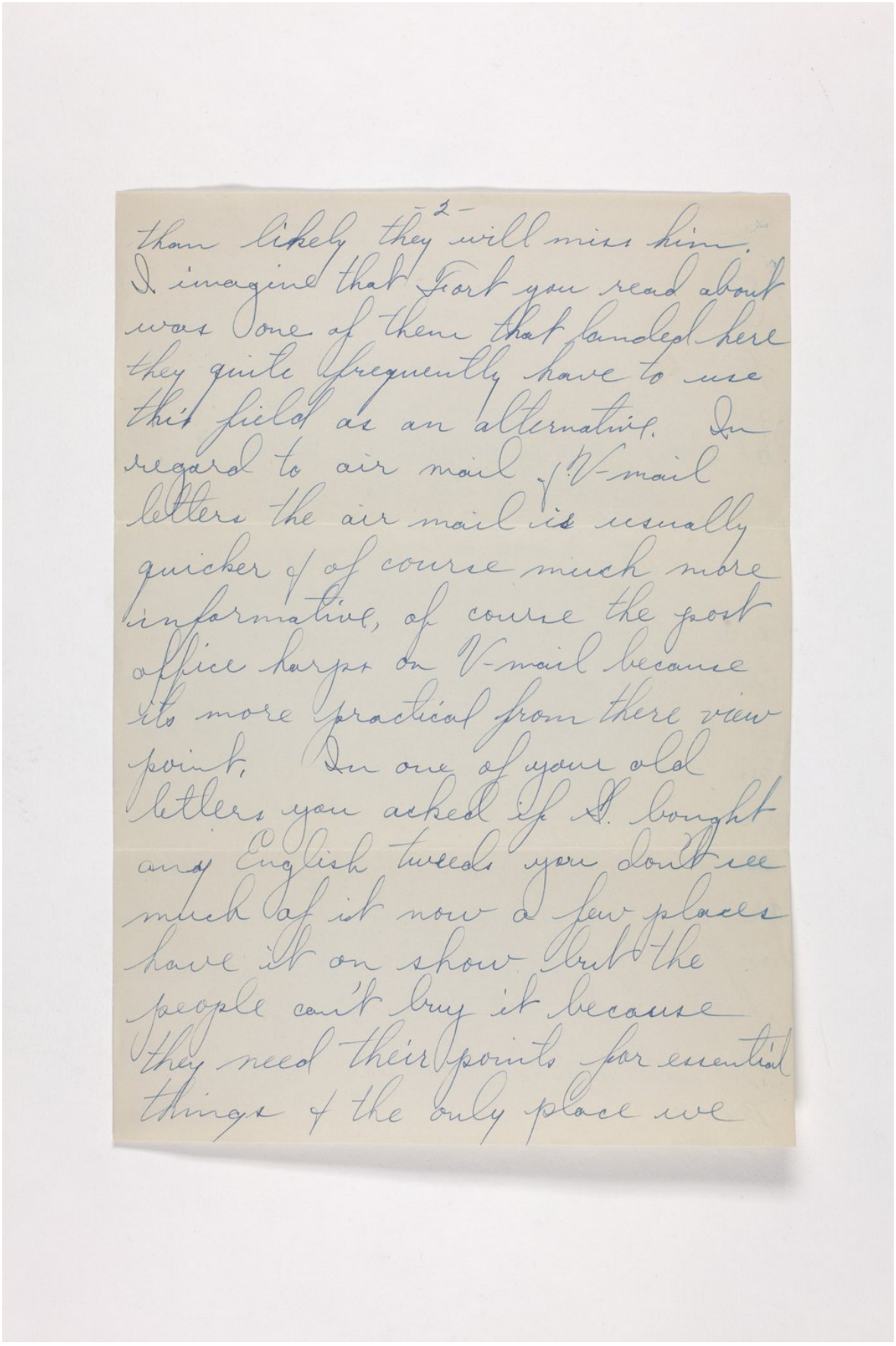
Dear Howdy-Shells:

Received your letter of Aug 27 a week ago but have been on an observation visit to a British A. A. gun site. Thanks for Ann's pictures I still can't realize that there are girls in your family now she looks fit as a fiddle except for the one picture I can't figure out whether she is crying yawning or just making a face. Tell Old (W. A.) Mary Lou that I'm glad she is in back of the war effort tho and that I want her to hold my head when I get the Purple Heart.

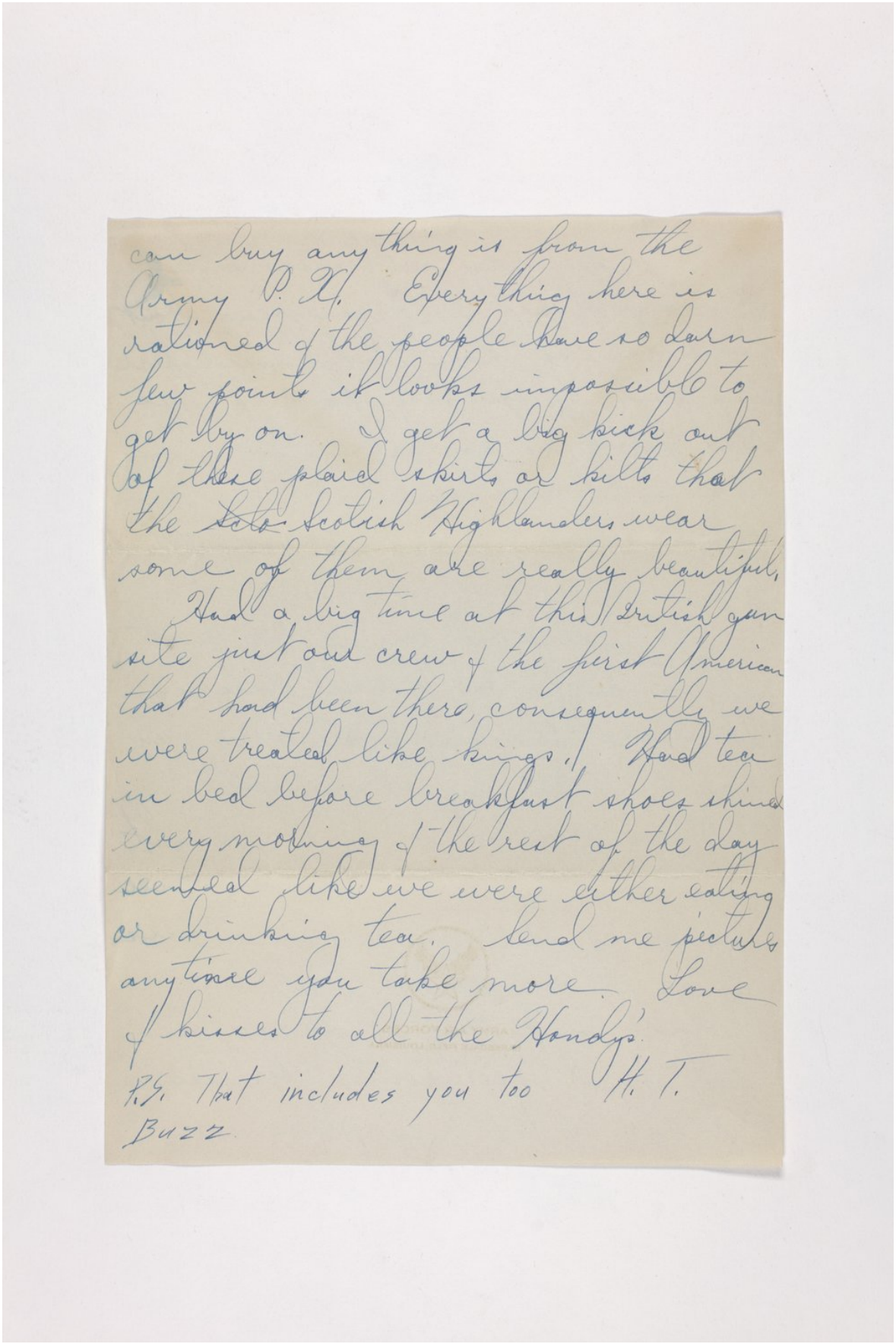


I have received both packages of cable, it seems to take a cable longer to get through than any thing else. I believe all of my back mail has caught up with me from my old A.A.F. number two different times a bunch of letters about ten or fifteen came at once some fun. Also the F.F.T.'s have started to come through have gotten four now. The Radio programs here are typical British mostly long haired stuff of the type I dont like of band music we get the best music from the German station occasionally B.B.C. system transcribes an Ofmerican program just finished hearing Bob Hope from N. Africa.

I'm glad Buzz has decided to sit tight & sweat it out more



-2-
than likely they will miss him.
I imagine that Fort you read about
was one of them that landed here
they quite frequently have to use
this field as an alternate. In
regard to air mail & V-mail
letters the air mail is usually
quicker & of course much more
informative, of course the post
office harps on V-mail because
its more practical from there view
point. In one of your old
letters you asked if I bought
any English tweeds you don't see
much of it now a few places
have it on show but the
people can't buy it because
they need their points for essential
things & the only place we

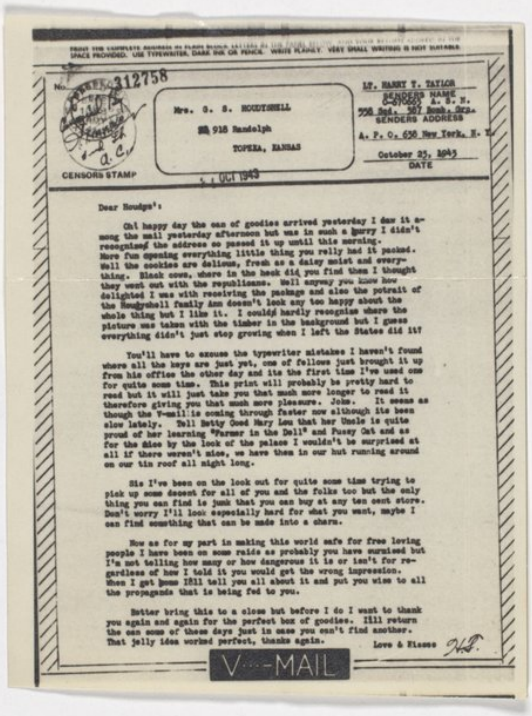


can buy anything it from the Army P. X. Everything here is rationed & the people have no darn few points it looks impossible to get by on. I get a big kick out of these plaid skirts or kilts that the Scotch Highlanders wear some of them are really beautiful.

Had a big time at this British garrison just our crew & the first American that had been there, consequently we were treated like kings. Had tea in bed before breakfast shoes shined every morning & the rest of the day seemed like we were either eating or drinking tea. Send me pictures anytime you take more. Love & kisses to all the Hondys.

P.S. That includes you too H. T.
Buzz


Lt. H. T. Taylor
387 Bomb. Group.
558 Squadron
A.P.O. 638.
New York, N.Y.
Air Mail
U.S. ARMY
638
SEP
20
1948
A.P.
AIR 6 MAIL
CENTS
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
PASSED BY
BASE
1093
ARMY
EXAMINER
Mrs. D. A. Handyshell
918 Randolph
Topeka,
Kansas



FROM: YOUR COMPLETE ADDRESS IN PLAIN BLOCK LETTERS IN THE SPACE PROVIDED. USE TYPEWRITER, DARK INK OR PENCIL. WRITE PLAINLY. VERY SMALL WRITING IS NOT SUITABLE.

No. 312758

CENSORS STAMP

OCT 1943

Mrs. S. S. HOUDYSHELL
918 Randolph
TOPEKA, KANSAS

LT. HARRY T. TAYLOR
SENDERS NAME
O-670665 A. S. N.
758 Sqd. 507 Bomb. Grp.
SENDERS ADDRESS
A. P. O. 638 New York, N. Y.

October 25, 1943
DATE

Dear Houdys':

Oh! happy day the can of goodies arrived yesterday I saw it among the mail yesterday afternoon but was in such a hurry I didn't recognized the address so passed it up until this morning. More fun opening everything little thing you really had it packed. Well the cookies are delious, fresh as a daisy moist and everything. Black cows, where in the heck did you find them I thought they went out with the republicans. Well anyway you know how delighted I was with receiving the package and also the potrait of the Houdyshell family Ann doesn't look any too happy about the whole thing but I like it. I could hardly recognize where the picture was taken with the timber in the background but I guess everything didn't just stop growing when I left the States did it?

You'll have to excuse the typewriter mistakes I haven't found where all the keys are just yet, one of fellows just brought it up from his office the other day and its the first time I've used one for quite some time. This print will probably be pretty hard to read but it will just take you that much more longer to read it therefore giving you that much more pleasure. Joke. It seems as though the V-mail is coming through faster now although its been slow lately. Tell Betty Coed Mary Lou that her Uncle is quite proud of her learning "Farmer in the Dell" and Pussy Cat and as for the Miss by the look of the palace I wouldn't be surprised at all if there weren't mice, we have them in our hut running around on our tin roof all night long.

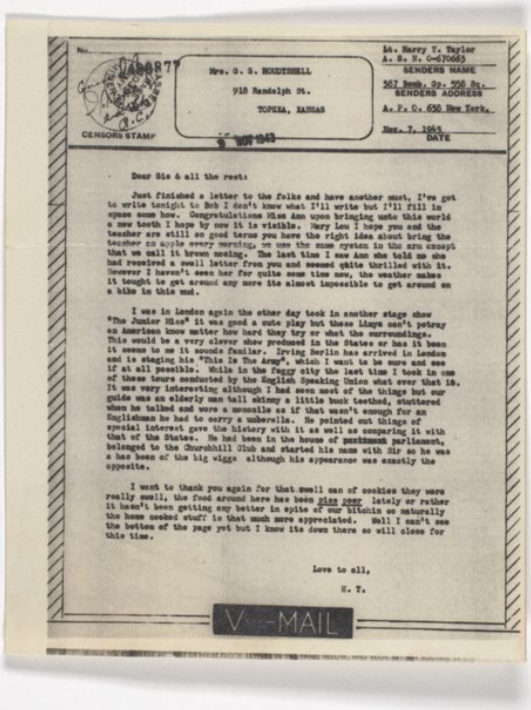
Sis I've been on the look out for quite some time trying to pick up some dessert for all of you and the folks too but the only thing you can find is junk that you can buy at any ten cent store. Don't worry I'll look especially hard for what you want, maybe I can find something that can be made into a charm.

Now as for my part in making this world safe for free loving people I have been on some raids as probably you have surmised but I'm not telling how many or how dangerous it is or isn't for regardless of how I told it you would get the wrong impression. When I get home 1211 tell you all about it and put you wise to all the propaganda that is being fed to you.

Better bring this to a close but before I do I want to thank you again and again for the perfect box of goodies. Ill return the can some of these days just in case you can't find another. That jelly idea worked perfect, thanks again.

Love & Kisses HTT.

V-MAIL



No. [illegible]

Mrs. O. S. HOUDYSHELL
918 Randolph St.
TOPEKA, KANSAS

Lt. Harry T. Taylor
A. S. N. O-670665
SENDERS NAME
567 Bomb. Sq. 392 Bg.
SENDERS ADDRESS
A. P. O. 650 New York.

CENSORS STAMP

9 NOV 1943

Nov. 7, 1943
DATE

Dear Sis & all the rest:

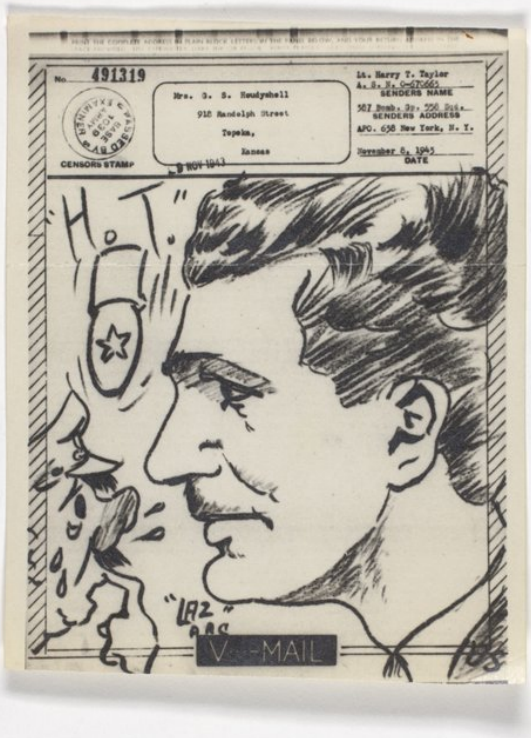
Just finished a letter to the folks and have another start, I've got to write tonight to Bob I don't know what I'll write but I'll fill in space some how. Congratulations Miss Ann upon bringing unto this world a new tooth I hope by now it is visible. Mary Lou I hope you and the teacher are still on good terms you have the right idea about bring the teacher an apple every morning, we use the same system in the sru except that we call it brown nosing. The last time I saw Ann she told me she had received a swell letter from you and seemed quite thrilled with it. However I haven't seen her for quite some time now, the weather makes it tought to get around any more its almost impossible to get around on a bike in this mud.

I was in London again the other day took in another stage show "The Junior Miss" it was good a cute play but these Limys can't potray an American know matter how hard they try or what the surroundings. This would be a very clever show produced in the States or has it been it seems to me it sounds familar. Irving Berlin has arrived in London and is staging his "This Is The Army", which I want to be sure and see if at all possible. While in the Peggy city the last time I took in one of these tours conducted by the English Speaking Union what ever that is. It was very interesting although I had seen most of the things but our guide was an elderly man tall skinny a little buck toothed, stuttered when he talked and wore a monocle as if that wasn't enough for an Englishman he had to carry a umberella. He pointed out things of special interest gave the history with it as well as comparing it with that of the States. He had been in the house of parliament parliament, belonged to the Churchhill Club and started his name with Sir so he was a has been of the big wigs although his appearance was exactly the opposite.

I want to thank you again for that swell can of cookies they were really swell, the food around here has been piss poor lately or rather it hasn't been getting any better in spite of our bitchin so naturally the home cooked stuff is that much more appreciated. Well I can't see the bottom of the page yet but I know its down there so will close for this time.

Love to all,
H. T.

V-MAIL


No. 491319
Mrs. S. S. Routzahn
912 Randolph Street
Topeka,
Kansas
CENSORS STAMP
9 NOV 1943
Lt. Harry T. Taylor
A. S. N. O-675662
SENDERS NAME
567 Bomb. Sq., 386 Bmb. Gp.
SENDERS ADDRESS
APO. 638 New York, N. Y.
November 6, 1943
DATE
"HOT"
"LAZ"
V-MAIL

Tues. Nov. 16,

Dear Sis, Buzz, Mary Lou & Ann:

I'm going to kill several birds with this letter by answering Buzz's, Mary Lou's and your letter all in one besides doing my Christmas shopping. Of course I think its a piss poor way of doing it but about the only way over here. I hope some day I will run across something that is buyable and will make a novel souvenaor (?) for you. I did pick up a charm for you bracelt Sis but most of the jewerly is junk or just the common everyday stuff. As you have already notice enclosed is a check which is a substitute for Christmas Cheer from me to you all. There is five for each of you get something you have wanted that you wouldn't of got otherwise. Merry Christmas & all that stuff there.

Was very pleased to receive your letter the other day Buzz, just as I am always from any of you put this came as a surprise. I can't believe you not on speaking terms with your draft board just as I was for so long, I'm hoping they don't have to call you even if it does dissapoint Mary Lou. Of course if they do theres not much we can do about it but I don't think it will last so long that you will have to get in on the dirty end of it.

Sis, in the first place you don't think I would write home and tell the folks if I didn't feel fit as a fiddle do you? That is about the same sitisuation as you asking whether the hut is warm enough. If it isn't what would you have me do see the Chaplain or turn in my resignation? As for me &

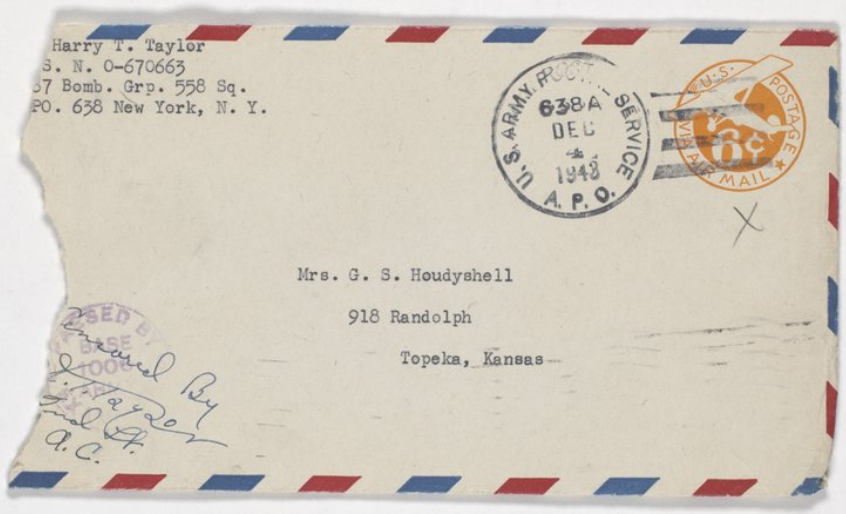
the helmet in that snapshot or I should say the helmet a I that is just a standard G. I. helmet and the tank corps use football helmets while riding in the tanks. The reason we wear them while flying is the danger of a live cartridge being cleared from the guns in the plane ahead and above us. When you are traveling that fast through the air a falling object as heavy as a 50 cal. will put you out of your misery. Yes, I always wear mine.

Tell Betty Coed Mary Lou that I think she is just about tops as an artist or anything else as far as that goes. I have just received the pictures of her birthday party from Mother and think they are swell. It looks as if eveyone had a good time including Gonga and Moma too.

Want to write the folks ~~tonight~~ ~~night~~ tonight (took two trys to get that spelled, pretty sharp eh?) but at this rate I'll never make it. Better close for now wishing you all the "MERRYEST ~~XXX~~ OF A CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR".

Love

H.T.


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